CHAPTER 2 A Man's Tears

SFX: SHAAAAA

ding
ding
ding
ding
ding
ding
...don't have the right to care for children.
...You...

Sister...
SIZZLE
Honey, I'm so proud of your artistic eggs.
Darling, please sit down.
Morning, Mum.
Oh, Dad, you're here too.
KACHIK

So, how's highschool? Have you done IT yet?
Heh heh!
Don't sexually harass me so early in the morning.

Good morning, Kiku-chan.
Morning. Where's the note that's due today?
It's on the table.

...Seems like you've grown a bit taller...
Doesn't it feel a bit cramped sharing a room with Kingyo?
I'm sorry about our apartment... It would've been nice if it were bigger...

Ouch.
Hey, how about you get a haircut?
It's fine.
But... won't you get you into trouble at school?

MUM, WHY'RE YOU APOLO-GISING?!
Besides...
It's not cramped at all!
Rather, it's really comfor-table!
...it's about time I should wake her up.
...I'm not the one...
...who should be feeling cramped. It's King-yo.

KER-CHUNK
Time to wake up, Kingyo.
Move, Uokichi.
Uokichi
meh
tap
tap
It's been three years since I was first brought here.
Meow
KYAAAA
TH
UD
I HATE YOU, KIKUYOSHI! AT LEAST KNOCK FIRST!
What the hell's wrong with you?!
I was nice enough to wake you up and....

...Ah.
Please get out..
BLUSH

SLAM
HOW MEAN!
IF YOU WERE AWAKE, YOU SHOULD'VE SAID SO! GEEZ, WHO'D WANT TO SEE SOMETHING LIKE THAT, ANYWAY?!
She's gotten a strange sex appeal lately...
...Tsk.
Kiku-chan.
Hmph
Sorry, you can come in now.
...What're you looking at?

I threw the pillow at you because you scared me.
I'm still not used to wearing a high school uniform...
...Ah.
Your tie's crooked. Don't move.
.....
...Kingyo.

Yeah?
BA THUMP
Ah...
...We're gonna be late.
Oh god.
Kiku-chan, your hair's a mess!
Hey, shouldn't you get a haircut?
I saw a teacher scolding you during the opening ceremony.

Shut up. I can have whatever hairstyle I want.
As if I could say that...
It's because having you spoil me every morning is the only thing I look forward to.
Wow... How nice. Your hair's so smooth, unlike my naturally curly hair...
Why don't you cut it?
I definitely won't cut it so just do whatever you like with it.
Hmph.
...but I'm really happy to be able to touch Kiku-chan's hair.
There you go again, saying those kinds of things..

Seriously, why're you always so arrogant?
I would've grown my hair, too, if it weren't so messy.
'Kay, I'm done.
...Short hair suits you better.
Ah...

WHOOSH...
WHOOSH...
We're off.
Be careful.
Morning, Kingyo. Kikuyoshi's hairstyle's really weird.
Morning, Gorou-chan.
Hah?
She combed it for me...
Kohu chan
I should have stayed there for a bit longer...
?

...Kiku-chan's become more extroverted.

Even so, the fact that we're a family won't change...

I hope that...
...they can grow up without any issues.

What are you saying?
Aren't they growing up just fine?

Hey, Kiku, whatcha get on the test?
Sigh.
It's to deepen your friendships.
85
Ugh, you're such a good student. It pisses me off.
What's this thing about a camp for new students?
ORIENTATIO
Looks boring.
rustle

WHOA! AMAZING!
amazed
pissed
SHAKE SHAKE

Kiku,
I've run out of lead. Lend me some.

.....
95

Yoshioka! How about Yoshioka? Whatcha get?
excited
excited
Are you that curious about everyone's marks?

Whoa, you two are pretty close! Are you guys gay?
KEEP TALKING AND YOU'RE DEAD.
poke
Make sure you put in extras next time.
Yeah.
Thanks.
catch
...Sorry.
I'm meeting up with Kingyo today.
No need to get so angry... Do you have a calcium deficiency?
poke
Wanna go to a karaoke place later to relieve some stress?

T/N: ONEE-SAMA = A RESPECTFUL WAY OF REFERRING TO AN OLDER SISTER.

Sure.
Class 1's timetable for tomorrow is long, isn't it?"
Gorou-chan, what're you writing?
tap
Really? So that's what you're doing... Then we'll head back home first, 'kay?
Shut up.
You should widen your circle of friends.
Kiku-chan, do you only hang out people you know from middle school?
Yeah.
Bye.

*"TN: IN JAPAN THERE AREN'T ANY SET TIMETABLES, SO THE NUMBER OF CLASSES IN A DAY IS VARIABLE. STUDENTS ARE SELECTED TO TAKE CARE OF "CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TASKS" ACCORDING TO A ROTATION. THE HOMEROOM TEACHER GIVES THEM THE TIMETABLE FOR THE NEXT DAY AND THEN THE APPOINTED STUDENTS WRITE THEM UP ON THE BOARD

ASAKAWA! YOU MUST GET THIS HAIR OF YOURS FIXED BY TOMORROW!
...Crap, he's getting yelled at.
S... SORRY
KIKU-CHAN WILL LISTEN, RIGHT?
Nod.
...Yeah.
School regulations exist...
...to be followed!
Eh?
PU

ASA-
KAWA!
Whoa, dude! They've already made it outside!
Maaan, he's sure changed.
He was a real pain in middle school, y'know?
He even asked me if I wanted a smoke when we first met...
...Geez, there's no way a person can change that much.

...was Kingyo.
...The person who changed Kiku...
...like a mother.
Kingyo constantly watches over him...
It's impossible for him to follow Kingyo around forever.
I see... but isn't it time for him to become more independent from his sister?

I think so too.
...Somehow.
...the sky and the grass really seem to suit you...
Yoshioka...
Ba-thump

OISHI
FAMILY
GRAVE
TANAKA
FAMILY
GRAVE

...The wind's...
...really strong...

FAMILY
GRAVE
I'll...
...go get some water.

I'm a high school student now,
Mum.
...Every-day...
...has been fun...

SPLASH

You've got me... by your side.
I'll be...
...by your side, forever...
...'Kay,
Sister...

Kiyo! Kiku-chan!
Make sure you eat your carrots!
Okay...
One day, you'll leave this house.
You'll leave me.
You'll get married and move somewhere far away.
...That's a lie.

...And that day may be near by
Kingyo's body...
...is getting getting ready to give birth to some unknown bastard's child.
.. This month.
...as well.

...Kiku-
chan?

What...
...are you doing...?
Kingyo.
My hair's a mess.
Fix it for me.
What?
It's my turn to throw out the trash.
I... I can take it out myself...
Hehe
.....
Jolt

Ah...
Sure.
What're you taking so long for?
It's just that it's hard to fix if I can't see it. It really is a mess...
Hmm...
...Recently...
...you've become more womanly.

Wait. Give this to the neighbour on your way out.
They're oranges from Shizuoka.
What're you saying?!
BLUSH
Nothing really. I just hope that some freak doesn't hit on you at school.
But, the most dangerous freak is me.

CATCH!
Tsk.
I missed.
It's late. What do you want from me?
Huh?
Track and field guide-book? Are you joining?
.....
...It's on the table.
Field book
reach
I'm not here for you, I'm here for this week's issue of Sunday.
Give it.

That's good, I guess.
Work more and cling less to your sister.
...Work.
Hey, wanna join a club together?
...Are you asking for a fight?
Can't. I've got work.

No, I'm not. Don't misunderstand.
HIT
I'm just worried...
...'cause you're too clingy to Kingyo.
What do you plan to do once she gets a boyfriend? You can't be like that then.
High school's different from middle school
Guys want to date someone cute and gentle like her.
...Hmph.
You make it sound as though you like her.

...I do like her.
You only just noticed?
...Why're you saying this all of a sudden?
...Dunno.
Just going with the flow...

Will it change anything if I confess to Kingyo now?

TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
...Did I go too far?
BANG
He really is like a stray cat.

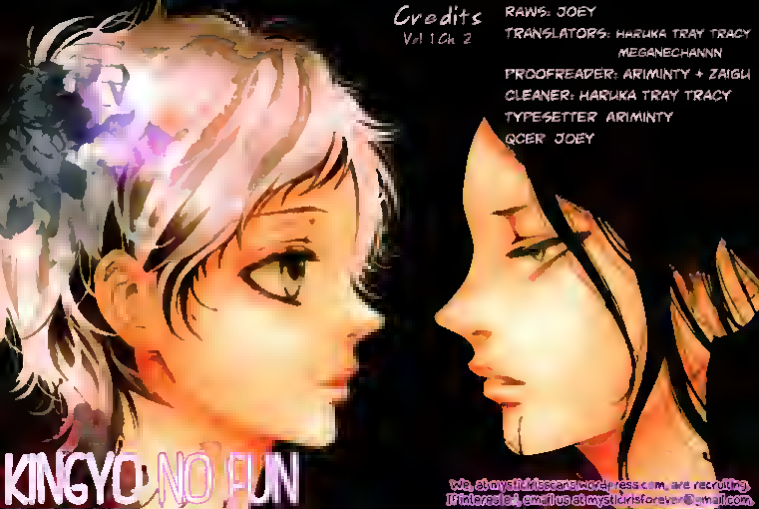
2:15
Fish

FLU
"Will it change anything?"
...Kiku-chan.
What's wrong?
Can't sleep?
.....
...No, I can't.
Really?
Then... you wanna come down here?

CREAK
CREAK
...Kingyo,
do you like Gorou?
Do you want to chat until we fall asleep?

Why're you asking me that all of a sudden?
I like both Kiku-chan and Gorou-chan.
Family... If it's family, then we can do whatever we want.
That's what you told me, right?
Yep.
If it's family, then we should forgive them no matter what.
Kiku-chan, you're acting weird today.
What's wrong?
.....
...Yeah. You're right.
I'm weird.

I'm really weird...
...King-yo...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